

**Santa Barbara Public Library System**

**COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY**

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## **Mission Statement**

The freedom to know is the foundation of our democracy. The mission of the Santa Barbara Public Library System is to be an information center for the communities it serves in order to preserve and encourage the free expression of ideas essential to an informed citizenry.

## **Purpose of the Collection Development Policy**

The collection development policy is intended to provide guidance, within budgetary and space limitations, for the selection and evaluation of materials which anticipate and meet the needs of the communities of the Santa Barbara Public Library System. It directly relates the collection to the library's mission statement, and defines the scope and standards of the various collections.

As the community changes, the library will need to reassess and adapt its collections to reflect new and differing areas of interest and concern. The collection development policy will be periodically evaluated and revised as necessary to provide guidance for implementing changes in the collection.

## **Selection Philosophy**

In support of its mission "to preserve and encourage the free expression of ideas essential to an informed citizenry," the Santa Barbara Public Library System fully endorses the principles documented in the Library Bill of Rights and the Freedom to Read Statement of the American Library Association. The library upholds the right of the individual to secure information, even though the content may be controversial, unorthodox, or unacceptable to others. Materials available in the library present a diversity of viewpoints, enabling citizens to make the informed choices necessary in a democracy.

Full, confidential, and unrestricted access to information is essential in order for patrons to exercise their constitutional rights.

The Library does not stand in loco parentis. Parents and guardians, not the Library, have the responsibility to guide and direct the reading, listening, viewing and Internet browsing choices of their minor children.

The Library collection will be organized, marked and maintained in a non-judgmental, objective manner to help people find the materials they want. Materials will not be restricted, sequestered, altered or labeled by the Library because of controversy about the author or the subject matter.

## **Selection Responsibility**

Though the overall responsibility for the collection rests with the Library's management staff, the responsibility for selecting and retaining materials is delegated to qualified and knowledgeable staff who employ the criteria outlined in this policy. The final responsibility for materials selection and retention resides with the Library Director.

## **Donations**

The Santa Barbara Public Library System accepts donations for the library's collection that fall within needed subject categories, as determined by the Library Director and the staff. Donated additions must meet the same selection criteria as purchased materials and are subject to the following limitations.

- The library retains unconditional ownership of the gift.
- The library makes the final decision on the use or other disposition of the gift.
- The library reserves the right to decide the conditions of display, housing and access to the materials.

Monetary gifts to the collection are welcome and may be designated as memorials.

- Donations of money designated for the periodicals and newspapers collection are accepted in lieu of actual subscriptions. These contributions offset the high cost of periodical subscriptions and maintain the continuity of subscriptions from year to year.
- Donors of funds may suggest subjects or titles to be acquired with their donation, but the library reserves the right of final decision.

## **Scope of the Central Library**

The Central Library serves the Santa Barbara Public Library System as a whole, in addition to serving as a resource for the seven branch libraries. As an urban library, the Central Library places major emphasis on access to information. It offers a reference collection that supports an in-depth reference service. A broad choice of circulating print and non-print materials is selected to accommodate the diversity of tastes, reading levels, languages and interests of users of all ages. The Central Library provides a strong collection of materials relating to the City and County of Santa Barbara.

## **Scope of the Branch Libraries**

The seven branch libraries serve specific neighborhoods within the Santa Barbara Public Library System from the Santa Ynez Valley through Carpinteria. Budget and space limit the branch collection to materials of high interest to its patrons. The interests and needs of the actual and potential users of the branch are continually evaluated so that each library has a collection reflecting the community that it serves. While each branch serves basic reference needs of its neighborhood with a small core of reference materials, it does not duplicate the in-depth sources or special collections of Central and other community resources.

## **General Criteria**

- Suitability of format or physical form for library use and as user demand dictates, based on universal criteria established in this policy.
- Cost relative to the value the item contributes to the collection
- Space required relative to the value the item contributes to the collection
- The extent to which the item supplements, expands on, or supports the existing collection, rather than duplicates it
- Relevance to observed and anticipated community needs and desires
- Reputation and qualifications of the author, creator, or publisher of the work as established through evaluation in professional journals
- Local significance of the author or creator of the work

## ***Content Criteria***

- Comprehensiveness of treatment, including breadth and depth
- Skill and purpose of author or creator
- Consideration of the work as a whole, rather than a specific passage or passages
- Evaluation of the currency and accuracy of the information contained, to the extent that is possible
- Representation of diverse points of view
- Representation of important movements, subjects, genres, or trends of local, regional, national, or global significance
- Long-term or historical significance or interest
- Relevance of the information to immediate local requirements

## ***Electronic Format Criteria***

- Ease of use of the product
- Accessibility to multiple users
- Access to needed equipment
- Enhancement of the print equivalent (if any) in terms of speed, flexibility, combinations of search terms, or general utility

- Continued access to retrospective information when necessary or desirable
- Reduction of space requirements over print products
- Reduction in number of copies of a print source when purchased for multiple locations

## Specific Selection Criteria

### *Adult Collection*

- **Fiction**  
The library's collection includes a wide variety of contemporary works of fiction representing all genres, international works of fiction, classics and important novels of the past. The library makes every effort to acquire fiction which is representative of the cultural and ethnic community that it serves and to satisfy the diversity of interests and recreational needs of its users.
- **Non-Fiction**  
The library aims at acquiring materials which provide a core of basic knowledge. In addition, the library selects, makes accessible, and promotes the use of materials which:
  - address contemporary issues
  - provide self-help information
  - support general educational needs of students
  - facilitate continuing education
  - enhance job-related knowledge and skills
  - increase knowledge of affairs of the community, the country, and the world
  - support business, cultural, recreational and civic interests in the community
  - nourish intellectual, aesthetic, creative and spiritual growth
  - present different viewpoints on issues

### *Audio Materials*

Music CDs are available at the Central Library and some of the branch libraries. Current audio purchases are only in compact disc (CD) format because of their availability and popularity. The adult music collection consists of works by major classical and contemporary composers, as well as popular music, folk music, rock, jazz, and opera. Children's music CDs include folk and nursery songs.

The spoken recording collection contains sound recordings of fiction and nonfiction books (primarily unabridged, but some abridged), poetry and drama, language instruction, read-alongs, storytelling, and other instructional

subjects. Branch collections of spoken recordings emphasize popular high-demand items and concentrate on current fiction.

The Central adult collection of books on CD encompasses popular fiction and nonfiction, as well as recordings of literary classics, language instruction, and general educational topics of popular interest

### ***Californiana and Local History***

The library possesses a unique collection of reference books on California history. The library no longer actively collects Californiana materials. It does, however, continue to acquire works relating to the local history of Santa Barbara County.

### ***Children's Collection***

To encourage life-long reading habits, the children's collection provides materials in a variety of formats and genres to satisfy and stimulate the informational, educational, cultural, and recreational needs of the children of the communities served by the Santa Barbara Public Library System from infancy through grade eight. The materials are selected with regard to the stages of emotional and intellectual maturity of children. The collection also provides adults with materials that relate to the well-being of children, enrich preschool and school curriculums, and aid in the study of children's literature.

### ***Downloadable Audiobooks***

The Santa Barbara Public Library System provides access to downloadable audio materials that include fiction and non-fiction titles that follow the general guidelines and content criteria for books. Collection development responsibilities are shared among the Black Gold Cooperative Libraries.(insert link)

### ***DVDs***

The library collects DVDs to meet the educational and recreational needs of adults and children. DVDs are collected under the same general guidelines as other collection materials. The library owns, but no longer purchases videocassettes for the collection.

### ***Electronic Databases (Commercial)***

Online computerized databases extend the collection by providing timely and versatile access to information in electronic format. Databases are used by the library staff to enhance and supplement reference service. Many of the databases contain specialized information beyond the scope of the library's print collections; others have information that does not exist in print format. Some databases, while duplicating print sources, are carefully evaluated with consideration to cost, frequency of use, and ease of access to library users.

### ***Foreign Language Materials***

The library maintains a collection of foreign language materials aimed at meeting the recreational and informational needs of the Central Coast communities served. Resources include books, magazines, and newspapers, DVDs and sound recordings, in the languages used by individuals in the community, for example Spanish, Chinese, and Japanese etc. These materials are primarily circulating.

The library's collection also includes materials which aid in learning a second language. These resources include books such as grammars and dictionaries, audio and visual materials for learning the languages most frequently studied in the community. Most of these materials circulate.

The library is committed to developing and maintaining foreign language collections which meet the needs of a changing Santa Barbara County population. Foreign language needs are assessed through such tools as patron registration data, patron requests, circulation statistics, and community awareness. The information gathered is used to determine the size and scope of the collection at each site. Availability and quality of materials may impact the development of the collections.

### ***Government Documents***

The library is a selective depository for the State of California and collects federal, state, and local government publications related to the communities served in order to make information published by the government accessible to citizens.

In selecting new documents to add to the collection, emphasis is placed on demographics, current legislation, economics, business, health, safety, and information about the government and its operation. Format and frequency of publication are also taken into consideration.

### ***Internet (Public Access)***

In conjunction with its mission statement, the Santa Barbara Public Library System provides access to a vast array of information available through electronic media. Electronic information, services, and networks provided directly or indirectly by the library will be readily, equally, and equitably accessible to all library users. The Santa Barbara Public Library System does not monitor and has no control over the information accessed and cannot be held responsible for the content, accuracy or quality of the information retrieved. Providing access to electronic information, services, and networks differs from selecting and purchasing material for the library's collection, offering unprecedented opportunities to expand the scope of information available to all users.

### ***Large Type***

The large type book collection meets the needs of an increasing number of visually impaired patrons. The major thrust of the collection is popular fiction, along with high interest non-fiction such as biographies and health-related materials. Large type books are purchased for the Central Library with rotating collections at the branches.

### ***Literacy Collection***

The literacy collection provides written material in a variety of formats to support the Adult Literacy Program. Materials used in the tutoring program comprise a large portion of the collection and should provide strong support for instruction. Other materials, consisting of both fiction and non-fiction, are written on a first to fifth grade reading level, and often emphasize practical subjects. The Central Library has the largest collection with smaller selections at some branch libraries.

In addition to this basic instructional material and in support of family literacy, a variety of children's picture books, read-alongs, games and parenting tapes and books are available for adult student learners to use with their children.

### ***Musical Scores and Songbooks***

The Central Library has a large collection of classical music scores as well as Broadway musicals, songbooks and fakebooks. The library no longer actively collects scores, but does keep an up-to-date collection of songbooks and fakebooks.

### ***New Media***

The library must continually assess new electronic media and evaluate the capabilities and enhancements that they offer over existing formats. When deciding whether to replace or augment existing formats with new media, the following factors are considered: anticipated improvements in information storage and retrieval, user demand, quality of the product, ease of use, equipment requirements, cost, and staff requirements for processing, maintenance, and training. It is essential for staff to monitor technological developments so that wise and cost-effective collection decisions are made for the Santa Barbara Public Library System communities.

### ***Paperbacks***

The library maintains uncataloged paperback collections in all of its branches to provide recreational reading in popular areas of interest. The collection duplicates many cataloged books, including best sellers, classics and works of perennially popular authors.

### ***Periodical Collection***

The library's newspaper and magazine collection provides current and retrospective information aimed at meeting the research and recreational reading needs of the community. The collection also contains periodicals that serve the professional reading needs of the library staff. Periodicals supplement the book collection by providing up-to-date information, covering current topics not yet available in books, and presenting a less in-depth treatment of a subject than is usually found in books.

The periodical collection consists of a diversity of publications in fields which are of interest to the community. It includes basic and popular reading magazines, foreign language publications, and a selection of business, trade, and local Santa Barbara County publications. Journals which are highly technical or scholarly are generally not included in the collection. In addition to magazines, the collection includes newspapers published locally as well as from major geographical areas of interest to the community.

Most back issues of magazines circulate. Back issues of many titles are accessible online or in microform for reasons of preservation and space conservation.

### ***Reference Collection***

The library maintains a reference collection which is used to answer questions and to serve the informational needs of library users. Reference sources are characterized by their ability to provide information and to summarize, condense, or give a comprehensive overview of a topic. They remain in the library to be readily available to all citizens. Selection criteria of particular importance for reference sources are: accuracy, arrangement, ease-of-use, uniqueness of information, authority, documentation, and indexing.

The reference collection at the Central Library contains standard works in areas of general reference, the humanities, social sciences, physical and biological sciences, technology, history and area studies.

The branch reference collections contain a core of basic ready reference materials supplemented by specific subject area resources of interest to that community. Branch staff have access to Central Library's reference staff and collections to obtain additional reference support and to access the more comprehensive resources.

### ***Textbooks***

Recognizing the responsibility of schools and universities to provide access to required textbooks for their students, the Santa Barbara Public Library System does not acquire textbooks required for school curricula. It does acquire some textbooks when needed to provide broad or introductory coverage in various subject areas.

## ***Young Adult Collection***

A young adult collection has been established at Central and some of the branches to satisfy the library needs of patrons from the approximate age of 13 to 18 years. The type of materials selected differs significantly from the children's collection because of the social, emotional, and intellectual maturity required to read them. This is primarily a browsing collection. Fiction and paperbacks are emphasized with a selection of topical non-fiction. Priority is given to popular titles, graphic novels and themes of contemporary interest to the target age groups.

## **Collection Maintenance**

Maintenance of the library's collection through constant re-evaluation by the library staff ensures its usefulness and relevancy to the community. This evaluation depends heavily on the staff's professional expertise in assessing the needs of the community and the content of the collection. Those materials determined to no longer be of value are withdrawn from the collection.

## **Discarding Library Materials**

Library materials are discarded for one or more of the following reasons:

- Obsolescence: subject matter is no longer timely, accurate, or relevant
- Damage or poor condition
- Space limitations
- Insufficient use

## **Replacements**

Replacement of materials withdrawn is not automatic. The decision to replace is influenced by:

- Availability of copies in the system
- Popular interest
- Adequacy of coverage in the subject area
- Significance in subject area
- Cost and availability

## **Reconsideration of Materials**

Persons from the Santa Barbara Public Library System communities wishing to recommend the removal of a particular item in the library collection may submit a Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials form, which will be reviewed by the Library Director and the staff in relation to the library's mission statement and the selection criteria of this collection development policy. After evaluating journal reviews and other materials submitted by the patron and the staff, a response will be made by the Library Director within 30 days of receiving the formal objection.

## **Policy Review and Revision Statement**

This collection development policy will periodically be evaluated and revised as times and circumstances require.

## **Library Bill of Rights**

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.

II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.

V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.

VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

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Adopted June 18, 1948, by the ALA Council; amended February 2, 1961; amended June 28, 1967; amended January 23, 1980; inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 24, 1996.

## The Freedom to Read Statement

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove or limit access to reading materials, to censor content in schools, to label "controversial" views, to distribute lists of "objectionable" books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to counter threats to safety or national security, as well as to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as individuals devoted to reading and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating ideas, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

Most attempts at suppression rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary individual, by exercising critical judgment, will select the good and reject the bad. We trust Americans to recognize propaganda and misinformation, and to make their own decisions about what they read and believe. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be "protected" against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.

These efforts at suppression are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, art and images, films, broadcast media, and the Internet. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy or unwelcome scrutiny by government officials.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of accelerated change. And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables change to come by choice. Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with controversy and difference.

Now as always in our history, reading is among our greatest freedoms. The freedom to read and write is almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. The written word is the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. It is essential to the extended discussion that serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures toward

conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings.

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

We therefore affirm these propositions:

1. *It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those that are unorthodox, unpopular, or considered dangerous by the majority.*

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept that challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

2. *Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what should be published or circulated.*

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

3. *It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political*

*affiliations of the author.*

No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free people can flourish that draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

4. *There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.*

To some, much of modern expression is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters values differ, and values cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised that will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

5. *It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept the prejudgment of a label characterizing any expression or its author as subversive or dangerous.*

The ideal of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for others. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

6. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large; and by the government whenever it seeks to reduce or deny public access to public information.*

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive.

Further, democratic societies are more safe, free, and creative when the free flow of public information is not restricted by governmental prerogative or self-censorship.

- 7. It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a "bad" book is a good one, the answer to a "bad" idea is a good one.*

The freedom to read is of little consequence when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of the freedom to read requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all Americans the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of the written word. We do so because we believe that it is possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

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This statement was originally issued in May of 1953 by the Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council, which in 1970 consolidated with the American Educational Publishers Institute to become the Association of American Publishers.

Adopted June 25, 1953, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee; amended January 28, 1972; January 16, 1991; July 12, 2000; June 30, 2004.

*A Joint Statement by:*

[American Library Association](#)  
[Association of American Publishers](#)